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PRESS CONFERENCE

A press conference will be held in Newark on Tuesday, February 16, 1971 at 2:00p.m. in the 5th floor Conference room of the United Community Corporation offices at 449 Central Avenue. Mr. Alvin Oliver, Director of U.C.C. will issue a statement and formal charges concerning discrimination against poor people by the American Telephone and Telegraph System and its association the Bell Systems Company.

Mr. Oliver, charges the Telephone Company discriminates against poor people who live in urban city areas. He states that, poor people as well as senior citizens pay anywhere from \$50-\$100 for installation charges and deposits. Middle and High income families who live in the suburbs are not required to pay a deposit.

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AT&T stated, that 81% of the poor people living in urban areas have phones. In a recent survey conducted by Mr. Oliver at a low income apartment house of the 738 apartments polled only 437 had phones. In Newark recently, the Essex County Welfare Department have discontinued giving welfare recipients emergency funds for telephones. This will only decrease the percentage of phone usage by poor people. Monies used for deposits and installation will now have to come from the welfare recipients regular budget. The welfare family who lives in a hotel (and many do) is also being cheated out of his money. The hotel phone user should be refunded for time not used on the telephone. At present the Telephone Company charges a flat rate for a long distance call for three minutes. If you only talk for one minute you are still charged for three minutes of usage. No rebate comes back to the user.

Other examples of discrimination will be brought to your attention at the press conference.

The Federal Communications Commission is now holding hearings in Washinton, D.C. concerning the charges brought to their attention by Mr. Oliver and other private citizens.

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